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From the Reference Desk

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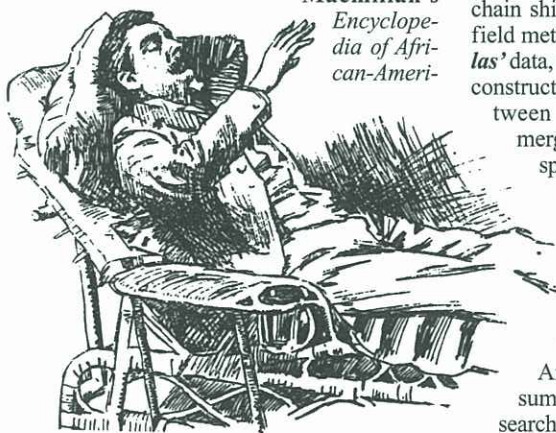
by **Tom Gilson** (Head, Reference Services, Addlestone Library, College of Charleston, 66 George Street, Charleston, SC 29401; Phone: 843-953-8014; Fax: 843-953-8019) <gilson@cofc.edu>

The *Encyclopedia of African American History, 1619-1895: From the Colonial Period to the Age of Frederick Douglass* (2006, 0195167775, \$375) is the first installment of what may well become a necessary reference for well rounded academic collections. Edited by respected scholar **Paul Finkelman**, these three volumes concentrate on the Black experience in America from the Colonial era until the advent of the 20th century in nearly 700 entries and subentries. Numerous and substantial biographies make up a good portion of the set. Coverage is diverse and includes lawyers, politicians, entrepreneurs and business leaders, as well as women's rights advocates, artists and poets. Naturally, there are articles on other substantive topics and issues. A variety of entries covers aspects of subjects ranging from law and legislation to religion; culture and daily life to slave resistance; and from the arts and music to the military and war. There are also articles that discuss specific events, political and social movements, court cases, and organizations and institutions. In addition there is a revealing series of articles on the attitudes of a number of the Early Founders regarding African Americans. **Jefferson, Adams, Franklin, Washington, Hamilton, Madison** and even **Henry Laurens** and **Aaron Burr** are included.

High production values are evident throughout the set. While the volumes are text rich, there are numerous photos and illustrations, as well as some charts and maps that lend to the attractiveness of the set. Each entry has its own bibliography and useful cross references to related entries. The general index is well structured and easy to use and includes "see" references to appropriate headings throughout. A thematic index also helps unite related articles and a chronology of major events adds to the historic flow of the set.

With their usual emphasis on quality scholarship, **Oxford University Press** provides a set of enduring value. While not as sweeping in coverage as the other two admirable works in the field; **Oxford's** *Africana: the Encyclopedia of the African and African American Experience* (2005, 0195170555, \$570) and

Macmillan's
Encyclopedia of African-American



can Culture and History: the Black Experience in the Americas (2005, 0028658167, \$695), the articles in this set offer unique scholarly depth and thoroughness. Along with its companion set, the *Encyclopedia of African American History, 1896-2005: From the Age of Segregation to the Twenty-first Century* (0195167791, \$395) due out in late November, this encyclopedia will prove a major contribution to academic library collections. Larger public libraries where there is substantial interest will also want to give it strong consideration.

(Both of these sets are also part of the online collection entitled the *Oxford African American Studies Center* now available from **Oxford University Press**, see <http://www.oxfordaasc.com>.)

Scholars interested in the rich diversity of dialects in Canadian and American English will find a wealth of information in a recent work published by **Mouton de Gruyter**. The *Atlas of North American English, Phonetics, Phonology and Sound Change* (2006, 3110167468, \$749) offers a vivid picture of the shift and merger of geographic dialects throughout the United States and Canada. And to make the *Atlas* as useful as possible, it is a true multimedia production with an accompanying CDROM, as well as a Website (www.anae.mouton-content.com.)

Based on a telephone survey conducted from 1992-1999, authors **William Labov**, **Sharon Ash**, and **Charles Boberg** reveal the "geographic dispersion of [dialect] changes in progress" in urban areas with a population of 50,000 or more. Creating and utilizing a database of 805 recorded interviews of 762 local speakers, the authors developed the data that led to the findings published in this *Atlas*.

The scholarship is painstaking and meticulous throughout the 23 chapters of the book. The first chapter discusses earlier efforts at dialect geography dating to the 1920s, as well as the purpose, design and organization of the *Atlas* itself. Other early chapters are devoted to the North American vowel system, principles of chain shifting and mergers, the sampling and field methods employed in assembling the *Atlas*' data, methods of acoustical analysis and the construction of isoglosses, or boundaries between dialects. Middle chapters discuss mergers and contrast, mergers in progress, specific North American vowel sounds and overviews of North American dialects. Later chapters cover regional patterns in the Northern US, New England, New York City, the Mid-Atlantic States, the South, Midlands, the West and in Canada.

There is also a chapter on African American dialects. The last chapter summarizes the findings of the *Atlas*' research. As mentioned earlier, a CDROM and

Website supplement the book and offer a database with "more than 100,000 vowels and mean values for 439 speakers, extended sound samples of all North American dialects and multimedia material for further study."

The *Atlas of North American English, Phonetics, Phonology and Sound Change* is a highly specialized work that will be greatly valued by professionals and scholars in the field. It collects an immense amount of original research data and brings it to life with numerous maps, vowel charts and accompanying multimedia. This reference work is both a testament and a reflection of the rich, complex and diverse nature of North American language dialects. Academic libraries, especially those supporting linguistics programs will find it an obvious and necessary choice.

Sage Reference's *Encyclopedia of World Poverty* (2006, 1412918073, \$395) addresses an important and always timely topic. Edited by **Mehmet Odekun** with contributions from more than 125 international scholars, this three-volume set delivers more than 800 articles on a diversity of issues related to world poverty.

Significant among these articles are 191 entries for individual countries. These nation profiles contain historic, political and cultural background, as well as current status. Each of these entries is enlivened with relevant statistics including rankings on the Human Poverty and Development indexes when available. Beside these country entries, the *Encyclopedia* includes articles on broad ranging topics like the causes and effects of poverty, its economic aspects, history and historic figures, definitions and poverty measurements, as well as specific poverty relief efforts and antipoverty organizations. There are also articles on religions and secular charities, as well as those that focus on issues of poverty related to women and children.

The articles are written in straightforward style that will appeal to the informed lay reader, as well as students and scholars. Each entry is signed and has a bibliography, as well as "see also" references. Added features include a glossary, a thematic reader's guide that groups related articles and appendices of US economic data and other economic country profiles. The general index is replicated in all three volumes and provides access to specifics by volume and page numbers.

The coverage in the *Encyclopedia of World Poverty* is far ranging and comprehensive. As one examines the content, you are struck by the enormity of the problems addressed here. In addition to providing relevant facts and a wealth of background, this work goes a long way in helping define the scope of worldwide poverty today. As editor **Odekun** points out, billions of people live in a deep poverty that is unimaginable to most of us. This reference makes that

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fact clear. While the *Encyclopedia* is primarily intended for academic libraries, given the importance of the issues covered, large public libraries will want to seriously consider it.

Students and scholars, as well as fans of American music, will welcome two recent titles from Routledge. *The Encyclopedia of American Gospel Music* (2005, 0415941792, \$150) and the *Encyclopedia of the Blues* (2006, 0415926998, \$295) both focus on uniquely American musical art forms.

In the *Encyclopedia of American Gospel Music*, Editor W.K. McNeil and more than 60 contributors chronicle American Gospel music from the mid and late 19th century until today. Making this a real challenge is the fact that this is a story of multiple styles of gospel music that are both individual and intertwined. Traditional and Southern Gospel centered in the white community and Black Gospel of the African American community offer a rich tapestry. As the article on "Performance Styles" notes "gospel music has absorbed and cross-pollinated with a great variety of secular and sacred music...stretching from traditional to hip-hop." The articles in the *Encyclopedia* make these diverse influences clear.

As you might expect the vast majority of entries cover individual and group performers and are as varied as the music itself. There are articles covering the careers and contributions of artists ranging from **Thomas A. Dorsey** to **Mahalia Jackson** to **Andrae Crouch** and from the **Carter Family** to **George Beverly Shea** to

the **Jordanaires**. There are also articles on broader themes like the Globalization of Gospel, institutions like the **International Gospel Music Hall of Fame**, music publishers like **James D. Vaughn**, and related music forms like jazz and bluegrass. Many entries are followed by a list of further readings and a selected discography. There are "see also" references and while these are helpful, a thematic index grouping articles would have been very useful. This is especially true given that the general index is of limited help in finding entries under some subjects. For example, there are articles on the record companies like **Myrrh Records** or the **Skylite Recording Company** but no entry in the general index under record companies that would take you to them. This shortcoming aside, the *Encyclopedia of American Gospel Music* is a very satisfying reference work. The content is highly diverse and the *Encyclopedia* does a great service by uniting the different traditions of American Gospel into one source. It should find a place in both academic and public libraries and is one of those books that could either be added to reference or circulation.

The *Encyclopedia of the Blues* is equally weighted toward coverage of artists and performers. Of course in this case, the genre is the blues and the entries are more numerous, filling two volumes. Besides biographies this set also includes articles on cultural artifacts of the blues like **Gandy Dancers** and **Juke Joints** and the blues during certain time periods like the **Great Depression**, the **Great Migration** and **World War II**. There are also articles on other musical styles, related art forms, and specific songs, as well as numerous articles on noteworthy record labels. Many of the articles are short and to the point but there are also substantial articles like the two-part, 23 page article on the

blues itself and the eight-page article on the guitar as blues instrument. As with the *Encyclopedia of American Gospel Music* many of the articles have bibliographies and "see also" references. But the *Encyclopedia of the Blues* has a thematic index that groups related articles and the general index does a solid job indexing broader topics and providing relevant page numbers.

Editor **Edward Komara** is joined by some 140 music scholars to produce the nearly 2,100 articles comprising this set. They have created a reference that provides the serious attention and scholarship this American music genre deserves. The set is structured for ease of use, the coverage is comprehensive and the writing style is jargon free and accessible. Of course, there are other sources that recommend blues recordings like **Backbeat Books' All Music Guide to the Blues: The Experts' Guide to the Best Blues Recordings** (1999, 0879305487, \$422.50), and those that provide biographies like **Penguin's Big Book of Blues: A Biographical Encyclopedia** (2001, 0141001453, \$20). However, the *Encyclopedia of the Blues* will stand as the most scholarly and well rounded reference available. It is warmly recommended for academic, public and larger high school libraries.

Anyone interested in public education will welcome this recent reference from **Grey House Publishing**. The *Comparative Guide to American Elementary & Secondary Schools, 2006: All Public School Districts Serving 1,500 or More Students* (2006, 159237137X, \$125) profiles 5,874 public school districts. Now in its 4th edition, the current work is comprised of individual state analyses that include an overall

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state profile, the **National Assessment of Education Progress (NAEP)** 2005 test scores, and county-by-county district profiles. Each of these district profiles gives the district mailing address, phone number and Website URL, as well as the number of schools. But the main value of the entries are the demographics like the number of teachers, male and female students, English language learners, those eligible for school lunches, student/teacher, student/counselor and student/librarian ratios, current spending by student, enrollment, number of diploma recipients, and high school drop out rate. After the district profiles are provided, rankings by district are given for the same demographic categories. Two separate indexes, one by school district and one by city are also provided.

Well focused and easy to use statistical sources on important issues like this are always of value. The *Comparative Guide to American Elementary & Secondary School, 2006*, should find a home in academic, as well as larger public libraries.

The *Legislative Branch of State Government People, Process, and Politics* (2006, 1-85109-761-9, \$95) is one of a three-volume series of handbooks from **ABC-CLIO** entitled *About State Governments*. Authored by **Thomas H. Little** and **David B Ogle**, this book offers the reader a thorough grounding in the role and function of state legislatures. Divided into six sections it begins by discusses the fundamentals of state legislatures, how they have developed, what they do, and the nature of their influence. The second section deals with the actual powers legislatures possess and how they make laws. The next three sections discuss structure and process, including leadership and hierarchy; elections, the people who serve and the nature of their work; and the political environment in which state legislatures function including their role with the federal system of government. The sixth and last section is perhaps the most useful from a reference standpoint in that it discusses the legislatures and general assemblies of each of the 50 states. Each individual entry describes the structure and membership, process, leadership, election pro-

cesses and key political factors unique to that state. It also gives the number of representatives and senators, as well as the phone number and Website address of the legislative body. The book ends with a helpful glossary, an annotated bibliography and a general index.

The *Legislative Branch of State Government People, Process, and Politics* provides a good deal of useful background information that students and other interested readers will appreciate. It is easy to use and full of facts and explanations. Taken with its companion volumes* it offers a uniquely comprehensive look at the lesser studied part of our federal system. Where budgets permit, high school, public and undergraduate libraries, should consider purchasing the whole series.

*The other two are *The Executive Branch of State Government People, Process, and Politics* (2006, 1851097716, \$95) edited by **Margaret R. Ferguson** and *The Judicial Branch of State Government People, Process, and Politics* (2006, 1851097511, \$95) edited by **Sean O. Hogan**. All three are also available as eBooks. For further information point your browser to: <http://www.abc-clio.com/products/browseseries.aspx?seriesid=50>. 

Book Reviews — Monographic Musings

Column editor **Debbie Vaughn** (College of Charleston) <vaughnd@cofc.edu>

Column Editor's Note: In this time of political campaigns and election matters, it can be beneficial to educate ourselves about legal matters such as affirmative action, copyright, contracts, and legal history. Three new **ATG** reviewers from the **Coleman Karesh Law Library** and the **University of South Carolina** offer insight into guides that highlight these very issues. **Terrye Conroy** explores **Greenwood Press's Affirmative Action Now**, which expounds upon various

college-related affirmative action topics. Copyright and contracts relating to genealogists, writers, and researchers are covered in **Carmack's Guide to Copyright and Contracts**, reviewed by **David Lehmann**. **Stacy Etheredge** delves into historical legal documents in her review of the two-volume set **Prestatehood Legal Materials**. Warm welcomes and many thanks to **Terrye, David, and Stacy**. Happy reading, everyone! — **DV**

Beckman, James, A. Affirmative Action Now: A Guide for Students, Families, and Counselors. Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 2006.
0313334153. 448 pages. \$55.00.

Reviewed by **Terrye Conroy, J.D., M.L.I.S.** (University of South Carolina, Coleman Karesh Law Library) <conroy@law.sc.edu>

James A. Beckman, Associate Professor of Law and Justice at the **University of Tampa** and editor of *Affirmative Action: An Encyclopedia* (Greenwood 2004), has created a helpful handbook for students, their parents, and counselors who wish to maximize the benefits of applying to colleges and universities that employ affirmative action in their admissions decisions. For college administrators, **Beckman** analyzes the guidelines provided by the **Supreme Court** for implementing a permissible affirmative action plan or program. For readers interested in gaining a better understanding of the subject, **Beckman** provides a fifty page primer, minus unnecessary legalese, on the proper use of affirmative action in higher edu-

cation as prescribed by the **Court** in its landmark 2003 affirmative action decisions, *Gratz v. Bollinger*, 539 U.S. 244 (2003) and *Grutter v. Bollinger*, 539 U.S. 306(2003).

Beckman begins with a review of the legal history and current status of affirmative action in higher education in the United States and concludes with predictions for its future. In between, he offers guidance to those affected by its implementation — minority students applying for admission to institutions of higher learning and those who will assist them along the way, namely their parents and counselors.

In his first four chapters **Beckman** addresses the current state of affirmative action, includ-

ing the legal parameters set by the **Supreme Court** and the various practices of colleges and universities in administering their affirmative action programs.

In chapter one **Beckman** examines the history of affirmative action in the U.S., focusing on the **Supreme Court's** decision in *Regents of the University of California v. Bakke*, 438 U.S. 265 (1978), which approved the consideration of race as a factor, but prohibited the use of racial quotas in higher education admissions programs. In chapter two, **Beckman** analyzes the two currently controlling 2003 **Supreme Court** decisions in which the **Court** invalidated the use of race by the **University of Michigan** in its undergraduate plan (*Gratz v. Bollinger*), but upheld its graduate/law school affirmative action plan in *Grutter v. Bollinger*. He also addresses the **Court's** recognition of diversity in the classroom as a compelling government interest and its authorization of the consideration of race in admissions plans providing they are carefully designed to comply with the specific guidelines outlined by the **Court** in *Grutter*. In the third chapter, **Beckman** describes the reaction to the *Gratz* and *Grutter* decisions as ranging from opponents vowing to continue challenges to state affirmative action plans to institutions discontinuing their affirmative action plans to colleges revising their plans to be more holistic and individualized with added emphasis on evaluative mechanisms such as the student essays. Appendix A lists all four-year degree-granting

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